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The Pioneer

BY GEORGE A. CLARKE

Ye killed the Pioneer of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. Acts 3:15.

AT the Congress of Vienna the representatives of the nations of Europe had met to engage in Europe's favorite indoor sport, the remaking of the map of Europe. While these representatives were busy at work, a great curtain of the council chamber moved and a uniformed lad stepped through, approached the moderator of the conference and said: "He is back again." "Who is back again?" inquired the moderator of the conference. "Napoleon," answered the uniformed lad. They thought they had Napoleon safely tucked away on the island of Elba, but he was back again, and on the highways of France the armies were gathering once more to his support. It was utterly futile to attempt to remake the map of Europe with Napoleon back again; and the congress folded up their half revised maps and adjourned. Then followed those historic one hundred days before Waterloo.

With a far finer meaning, a far nobler purpose, and a far longer outreach, Peter announced in the streets of Jerusalem concerning the murdered Jesus, "He is back again." "Ye killed the Pioneer of life." This world usually manages to kill its noblest pioneers. "Ye killed the Pioneer of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know, yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." The Pioneer is back again, and "where cross the crowded ways of life"—he is there.

There are many names by which Jesus is known in the pages of the New Testament; however, here is a name that we have little used. Dr. Moffatt has done well in translating it "The Pioneer of life," for the figure described by Peter is not of a political or military prince, but a courageous, adventuring pioneer leader moving out into new areas and conquering new domains.

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The Pioneer we look upon now is not the pioneer of geographic areas; that pioneer has a great place in the story of America, and to him we do well to give honor. The Pioneer we look upon now is not the pioneer of philosophy, or science, or politics; all of those fields have had their pioneers, and we do well to give them honor. The Pioneer we look upon now is the Pioneer of Life, the originator of a quality, a way and means of life, who could say: "I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly." If there is one thing that our afflicted humanity is calling for in this disillusioned age, it is the chance to live as people have the right to live.

If the old geographic frontiers have been conquered, it is only to discover that new human frontiers have appeared. There are the health frontier, the economic frontier, the interracial frontier, the educational frontier, and the world relations frontier. So far as I can see and hear and feel, in every one of these there are a few great demanding questions that will be put to any leader who will step out as the *pioneer* for the present age. What I want to do is to state those questions, as I have heard them asked in staccato notes, like the crack of a pistol. Here they are:

I

What now, in these conditions, is the meaning of life?

Here is one question that is being asked today. Recently I called at the home of an old lady over eighty-five years of age, for many years a church member. She has traveled far. She began her traveling with her own father in a sailing ship, and she has traveled in the high-powered vehicles of our day. She knows many people, and she knows many things. She stopped suddenly in our conversation, looked me in the eye, and asked almost fiercely: "Pastor, will you tell me what life is all about?" She said: "We grow up and get married, and see our children grow up and watch them leave us; we begin to slow down and wither and get ready to die; what is life all about, anyway?"

In one of A. S. M. Hutchinson's recent books, "The Uncertain Trumpet," he tells the story of Father Absolute, a priest of the Anglo-Catholic church in England, who had taken over an old church in a downtown section of London, where he did not so much preach as he consulted with people who came with their troubles, their diseases and their despair. So many came that he asked for helpers. One of his helpers was a bright young woman named Rhoda from a home of high social standing. At the end of one afternoon's work, he turned to Rhoda and said: "Rhoda, you are not so much living for this work as you are living by it. Tell me, from your window as you look out over life, what do you see?" And, in the utter frankness of youth, she responded: "All I can see is a great big question mark."

Will Durant recently used a whole book to discuss this question of the "meaning of life." I think he was asked to do it. His plan was to write letters to many people in various parts of the world. He wrote to such people as Will Rogers in California and Mahatma Gandhi in India, and the answers to those letters are recorded in Will Durant's book. At the close of the book, Mr. Durant tells what life means to him. He says: "It is to attach oneself to some whole, and then give oneself to it with all one's heart and mind and soul." For him, his "whole" is his home and his books. But right away I sense that the "whole" is not great enough. Suppose something happens to his home; things do happen to homes. Suppose something happens to his work, as it has happened to the work of millions of people today.

What I am saying is that, with staccato notes, people are asking now, "What is the meaning of life?" Sometimes the question is asked by an elderly lady, sometimes it is asked by a young Rhoda, sometimes it is asked by a boy scout. So I turn to the Pioneer of Life for an answer. What has he to say?

One day Jesus was preaching, preaching in a passionate appeal to people. Apparently he stopped for a moment on that hot Palestinian day. Perhaps he stopped, as many another speaker has stopped, for a few seconds to take a drink of water—perhaps just that; and in that brief interval a man down in the congregation piped up with the demand: "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." Do you remember Jesus' reply? He said, "Man." The word "man" can be used with stern rebuke. He said: "Man, who made me a divider among you? A man's life does not consist of the abundance of things that he possesses." Then, very significantly, Jesus told the story of the rich fool who thought that it did consist in that, and nothing else.

What does Jesus say is the "meaning of life"? He answers by his whole ministry; and, as I look at life through his eyes, I see that the meaning of life is to discover man's nature, and quality, and status as a relative of God, God's kinsman; and to fare forth in the great spiritual adventure after truth, and beauty, and love, and righteousness and justice in fellowship with man and God. And in that meaning for life, I find that which will call forth in action all the energies that God has given me for all the days.

The Pioneer is adequate as the revelation of the "meaning of life."

II

Where now is the adequate center of loyalty?

Here is another question which is up on all our human frontiers today. That question is being asked in staccato notes, like the rattle of a machine gun. That question is being asked murderously. I am not speaking poetically, but realistically. Carveth Wells, a sort of happy vagabond, who tramps the earth to get stories for lectures and books, has written his story of Russia under the title "Kapoot." He tells of visiting the anti-religious museum in Leningrad. It was once a great cathedral; now it is the home of anti-religious art, or at least pictures. One picture is that of a football game—a game between the communists and the church. Lenin is the captain of the communists' team and God is the goal-keeper of the church team. Lenin has just kicked the ball and sent it straight into the stomach of God, who is hurtled back against a fence. The title of the picture is, "Kicking God Out of Russia." Carveth Wells remarks that among the young Americans in his group several of them expressed themselves forcibly that it was about time similar demonstrations were given in American churches.

On Lafayette avenue, in the city of Brooklyn, I recently walked with a brilliant young lawyer. We had been talking about this very thing, and he said: "If I had the power and the wisdom and the love that God is supposed to have, I could make a better job of this world than he is making of it." Of course I had an answer for that, which I need not state here. But what I hear is this fierce gun-crack of a question which asks, "Where now is the adequate center of loyalty?" What shall we demand of this adequate loyalty?

He must, as the educationalist put it, integrate life. That is, he must bring the elements of life together into a working unity. Whatever integrating life means, I

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know what disintegrating life means; I learned it lately. I had an old, unused watch in my study. My twelve-year-old boy got hold of that watch. He was curious to know how it was put together. He took off the crystal, and he took off the hands; he took off the face, he picked it apart wheel by wheel; he lifted out the springs, and when I saw it the watch was spread over my desk. It was a disintegrated watch. I looked at the boy, and he looked at me. The question was, how to integrate it. And we quickly found a negative answer to that question of integration, as we gathered up the parts and put them in the waste-paper basket.

The fact that we speak of the need to integrate life assumes that the lives of people are in a disintegrated condition. What has our Pioneer to say concerning this question of integration? Look at him. Some people came one day to a house where Jesus was preaching; bringing with them a paralyzed man. They could not get into the house for the crowd, but they went up on the roof and lifted away some of the roofing and let him right down at the feet of Jesus. That wrecked that sermon, but it started another; and Jesus said to the young man, "Get up, I say to you, get up and carry your own bed." Something happened: mind and body were integrated. The man was a unity, and he walked off carrying his own bed. Do you know anybody that does that as Jesus does? How does he do it? The answer is, the whole gospel of the grace of God.

ENERGIZING LIFE

It is required of this adequate center of loyalty that he energize life. People need that. What is the response of our Pioneer? A woman came up behind Jesus one day and touched the hem of his garment—and everything was different. Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" Said Peter: "Master, the crowd throng thee, and sayest thou, 'who touched me?' " But he said, "Power has gone out of me." Sometimes he ministers by the direct touch that gives energy. Sometimes it is the ministry of releasing energy locked up within ourselves.

For five years I lived in the city of Edmonton at a point five hundred miles north of the Montana border. Oftentimes I had occasion to go farther into the northwest. Here and there over the rich black soil of that far northwest there were great sloughs, little stagnant lakes. The pioneer examined that situation, and it was found in many cases that beavers had come down from the foothills of the Rockies and dammed the water-courses and flooded great areas, thus forming the sloughs. What the pioneer did was to find the actual water-courses and the dams which the beavers had built. Then he put sticks of dynamite into those beaver dams and blasted them away and let the water run off in the natural courses. Thus great areas of deep black soil were released for farms.

Sometimes life gets into that condition; a dam is built right across the soul. Fear will build a dam across the soul. Selfishness will build a dam across the soul. Doubt will do it. A sense of guilt will build a dam across the soul. But, when our great Pioneer deals with the inner life of a man, he blasts away that dam and releases the life, just as surely as he released St. Augustine and John Bunyan. "Bring my soul out of prison," prayed the psalmist. Who else can release a man as Jesus does? He said that he had come to preach release to the captive.

A SENSE OF DIRECTION

The adequate center of loyalty will be required to give a sense of direction. Grand old Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, who ministered so long and so gloriously at the Broadway Tabernacle in New York city, said to a group of us one day: "Although I have lived here for a long time, I can still get lost in New York city." He said: "When I come up from the subway, I very often have lost my bearings entirely. Then I look for the nearest policeman, and I say, 'where is north?' And when I know where north is, then I am all right."

One summer Saturday night I had occasion to make the boat trip from New York to Providence. It had been one of those very hot spells in New York city, when for sixteen days we were alternately baked and boiled. It was all so good to be out on the open sea that I remained on deck until very late. At eleven o'clock I was standing in the bow of the ship talking with the

lookout man. At twelve o'clock I was there. At one o'clock Sunday morning, although I was to preach that morning, I was standing there talking with that lookout man. The moon was riding high, and we could see the lights of other ships passing by. Then suddenly we sailed into a deep, thick fog, and I stopped talking to the lookout man. He had something else to do. From the bridge came the voice of the captain, who shouted: "Keep a sharp lookout, we ought to be picking up the buoy soon." I saw the lookout man with his hand over his eyes peering out into the fog. On either side of us we could hear the whistles of ships as they gave their location, and our ship answered. Then, after a time, he called: "A light on your port bow, sir." I saw him cup his ear and listen, and soon I heard him say: "A bell on your starboard bow, sir." Then in a few minutes we sailed right between those two marks, the light on one side and the bell on the other. We call that sailing by dead reckoning; that is, right in front of the captain are reliable instruments and he, a competent captain, reads those instruments accurately, and he knows just where he is and where he is sailing.

What I am saying is that the Pioneer of Life today, the Leader, must give to the soul the sense of moral direction. What I am also saying is that Jesus Christ, our Pioneer, as does nobody else, gives that sense of direction. To have him with us is to know the way, for he is the way, because he is the truth and the life. Even certain cynics concede that of all the leaders of the world, Jesus alone is the reliable way up and on.

Yes, this age is asking: "Where now is the adequate center of loyalty?" And I respond: He is with us in Jesus, the Pioneer of Life, whom men killed, but God has aroused from the sleep of death, for he gives meaning to life, he energizes life and he directs life.

III

What are the prospects for tomorrow?

Here is another question this age is asking. In a book which is one of the great modern books of religious literature, "Grace and Personality," Dr. John Oman draws the picture of the Nile in the season of flood. He observes that when the Nile sent its flood over its banks, it spread its black ooze and mud over the fields of the peasants, fields on which long and patient labor had been spent. Now it looked as though the flood had ruined them. However, the answer to that situation was given, not by the engineers who would go up the river and dam back the waters, but by the daring pioneering peasants, who, in an act of inspired faith, flung their precious rice into the ooze and the mud, and found that the ooze and the mud were the givers of a great harvest. A flood has come upon us. The ooze and the mud of that flood have gone over the banks of our human Nile, and over the fields of our human efforts and attainments. It is useless to try to go up the stream to our yesterdays and build dams. The future lies with those who can see that the very conditions of flooded fields, with all life in a fluid state, are the conditions of hope, for we have the seed for those fields. We have it.

E. Stanley Jones has recently given us one of his most important books, "Christ's Alternative to Communism." That alternative is nothing short of following through with Jesus in his whole message and ministry of grace and truth, and to be sincerely and progressively and completely Christian. We have the seed and we have the alternative. Atheistic communism need not be our doom. Indeed, E. Stanley Jones sees Russia itself as the possible matrix of that truer Christianity. The kingdom of God can be our inheritance if we will simply dare to be Christian.

Let us not beat around Robin Hood's barn, but come straight to the issue. It all depends on the attitude that individuals and institutions take to the Pioneer. I well remember, just a little while after the armistice was signed following the world war, visiting Rheims cathedral. It was pock-marked with the wounds of battle. I came to the great front door and statues were broken. I walked into the great cathedral; in the nave were tons upon tons of wreckage. I looked up and could see out to the open sky through tremendous shell holes in the ceiling and the roof. I climbed over little hills of wreckage until I reached the chancel; everything was a scene of ruin. In the south transept windows were smashed in and a great painting, torn to tatters, was half buried in wreckage. In the north transept the great organ was a twisted mass of ruins; but beside it stood a magnificent statue of Jesus absolutely unharmed. I did not read any miracle in that then, and I do not read any miracle in that now. But I know that Rheims cathedral has been restored; and I also know that it was because it was a cathedral of Jesus Christ, where he was believed to be central, that a Christian American thought it worth while to make a great gift to make that restoration possible. Which thing is a parable telling me that what happens tomorrow to our troubled world will turn on the attitude which individually and corporately we take to Jesus, the great Pioneer.

Our whole problem at last reduces itself to one simple question: Shall we or shall we not make him central? Our individual and corporate triumph will be the answer to our answer to him. The whole range of human life and relations is the domain of the Pioneer.

Dr. John Hutton has thought it worth while for the second time to print in his influential journal, the British Weekly, an interesting story of Hillaire Belloc in the Pyrenees.

Hillaire Belloc is not only a literary genius; he is also an accomplished mountain climber. One summer he started out to walk through the Pyrenees from France into Spain. He took along with him a novice, who had not been in the Pyrenees. When night came on, they were on a high ledge up in the mountains. They spread out their blankets, lay down, drew their blankets around them and went sound asleep; but toward morning a terrific storm came roaring through the hills, tearing great rocks from their ancient abiding places, and sending them cannonading into the ravines between the hills. The novice awoke and reached out his hand and took hold of Hillaire Belloc by the shoulder and shook him, saying: "Wake up, it is the end of the world." Hillaire Belloc awoke, rubbed his eyes, looked around, and said: "No, no, this is not the end of the world, it is merely daybreak in the Pyrenees."

We do not need to be told that a storm is blowing, and we know that rocks are falling and exploding like

the boom of great field guns, but it is not the end of the world; it is dawn!

Jesus is the Great Pioneer. They killed him, but God has raised him from the sleep of death. He is here. He is back again! We ask, "What does life mean now?" And Jesus says: "You are kinsmen of the most high God, and life is a great spiritual adventure with truth, and life, and righteousness as sons and daughters of God." We ask, "Where is the adequate center of loyalty?" And he says, "Follow me, and I will make you." We ask, "What are the prospects for tomorrow?" And he says, "Behold I make all things new." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ."

Trumpeter, O Trumpeter Divine!
Trumpeter, sound!
Bid the bandits of night depart!
Too long the destroyer has worked his will.
Sound for the Dawn, whose name is Faith;
Sound for the Morning, whose name is Hope;
Sound for the New Day, whose name is Love.
Sound for the Splendor of God!

Trumpeter, Trumpeter, sound!
Sound the last, the last of the wars;
Sound for the heights where we walk with God;
Where Truth is the way, and Love is the law,
With hell beneath and heaven above.

Trumpeter, Trumpeter, sound!
Rally us, rally us, rally us
On to the City of God.

God In The Storm

By Clarence E. Macartney

Be of good cheer, for I believe God. Acts 27:25.

A SHORT CREED; but it worked in the storm. That is the main thing about a creed; not the length of it, not the stately language in which it is framed, not the antiquity of it; but, Does it work? Will it work in the storm? A classmate of mine in the seminary, who passed through great affliction, and found that he had a creed that worked in the storm, said to his wife: "We have preached about it, and sung about it, and prayed about it, and talked about it; now let us see if it will work." He found that it did. He had a creed that worked in the storm.

On this night and in this storm this was the only thing that did work. All other devices failed; all other voices were silent. Everyone else quit, surrendered, despaired—the centurion, the super-cargo, the soldiers, the sailors, the master of the ship, the prisoners and the gods to whom they prayed. There was no voice but the wail of men who wait for death. No voice but that of the storm, the groaning and laboring of the ship, the crash of the waves, and the howling of the wind. Then it was that Paul lifted up his voice and said: "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God." Man's extremity was God's opportunity.

On trial before Festus at Cæsarea, Paul had appealed to Cæsar; and to Rome, therefore, he was sent. He and other prisoners were under the custody of a just and generous centurion, Julius, of the Augustus band, or legion. Sailing from Cæsarea, Paul, with Luke and Aristarchus, touched first at Sidon and came to Myra on the coast of Asia Minor. There the centurion transferred his prisoners to one of the great Alexandrine grain ships bound for Italy. The strong wind from the north compelled them to sail south, where they rounded Salmone at the eastern end of the island of Crete, and sailing along the coast took refuge in the port of Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea. Farther along the coast was a more commodious harbor, Phenice; and the centurion and the captain and the ship owner determined to sail for that port. Paul, who already had been shipwrecked three times, knew the habits of those seas as well as the navigators, and warned them against making the attempt at that time of the year. But "when the south wind blew softly," and all seemed favorable, they weighed anchor and put out to sea.

MAN'S EXTREMITY, GOD'S OPPORTUNITY

Almost at once a great storm broke over them. The ship took refuge for a little in the lee of a small island, Clauda. There they undergirt the ship with cables, cut away the wrecked gear and tackling, threw overboard the cargo of wheat, and setting a storm sail, were driven westward by the mighty hurricane. Day after day, night after night, the ocean raged and the storm roared about them. No sun nor stars appeared by which they could take their reckoning, or to smile upon them with hope. Centurion, captain, ship owner, soldiers, sailors, prisoners—all gave up hope and waited for death. But man's extremity is God's opportunity. There was a Hebrew prisoner on board who believed in God and was the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When the storm was at its worst, and all hope had died in the breasts of the ship's company, this Hebrew prisoner stood forth and said: "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God." Then he told them how the angel of the Lord had spoken to him and told him that he must stand before Cæsar; that his own life would be saved, and not only his life, but the life of all who sailed with him. The ship would be wrecked, but not a single life would be lost. So it came to pass, when the ship was driven on the rocks of Malta; but the whole company—Paul, the centurion, the soldiers, the ship owner, the captain, seamen and prisoners—in all, two hundred and seventy-six souls, some on boards, some by swimming, and some on broken pieces of the ship—escaped safe to land.

The word of Paul in the midst of the storm, and its effect upon those who sailed with him, tells us of the power of faith in God; how in the storms of personal life, or in the life of the nation, or in the life of the church, faith in God, and in what God has spoken, gives hope and deliverance. It also illustrates the influence of one man's faith on another. Paul was saved; and God gave him the lives of all those who sailed with him.

I

Faith in God is the foundation of our hope and happiness. "I believe God." Everything is founded upon

that. This is the supreme power, faith in the Supreme One. There were other powers represented on the ship that night; the power of the sea and the wind, the power of Cæsar, the power of superstition and idolatry; but the power of faith in God was transcendant. Faith in God has established nations and kingdoms. It has overthrown systems and empires.

All religion, all faith, begins there. The Bible begins there. "In the beginning God." The Ten Commandments begin there. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The Psalms begin there. "God is our refuge and strength." The prophets begin there. "Thus saith the Lord." The Lord's Prayer begins there. "Our Father who art in heaven." Revelation begins there. "God who at sundry times and in divers manners hath spoken unto us." Redemption begins there. "God so loved the world."

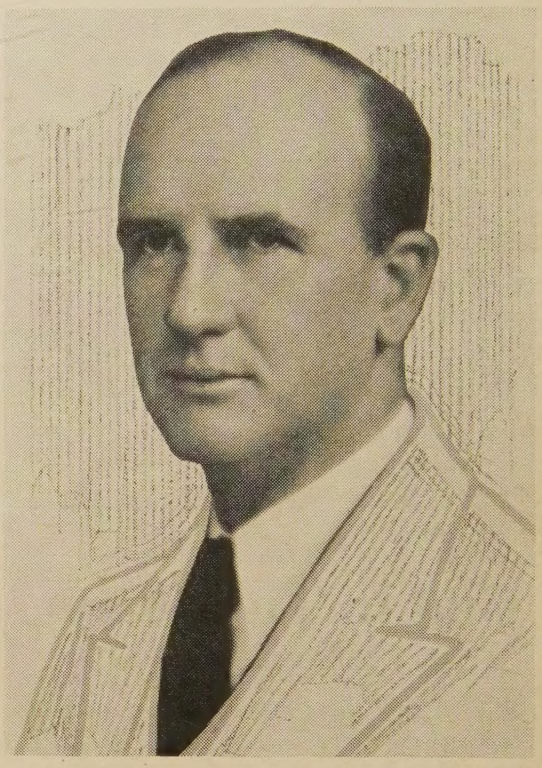
The center of the attack on religion has now shifted from the story of the creation, the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth, and the miracles of the New Testament, to that which is the foundation of all else—God. Never was there a time when so many all over the world were saying and shouting: "Where is now thy God?" Parties, and even nations, are organized today to say to the world: "There is no God." Therefore, with the open attack upon faith in God, and with popular theories of man and the universe which make it difficult to believe in God, it is all the more necessary that the church should with her own triumphant confession say, "I believe in God"; for it is that belief in God which floats all our great doctrines and upholds the moralities of life.

Without God, what are we, or where are we? Without God is to be "without hope in the world," as Paul declared the pagan world was when Christ came into it. The church needs a revival of faith in God, so that it can say to a struggling, sinning and despairing world: "Be of good cheer, I believe God." The God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament, the God of the prophets and the God of the apostles, the God who was "manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

II

Let us consider what faith in God, and in what God hath said, can do in the storm. God has spoken; but without our belief in what he has spoken, his revelation will do us no good. God had spoken to Paul, and Paul believed what God had said. On the ground of that he could hope, and could kindle hope in others. The Bible is no use to a man, and no use to the world, until its great utterances are believed. The Bible must be read with faith. Without faith in what God has said, the Bible is like the windows of a great cathedral, dark and cold and dull until lighted by the sun.

There are storms in the life of a nation. Our own nation has been passing through a storm. The ship of state labors heavily in the sea. Whether the measures proposed by our centurion, captain and ship owner, that is, whether the laws passed and plans adopted are for the best, and for the safety of the republic, none can tell. What is our resource and refuge? It is faith in God who planted this nation in the wilderness and who has made it a blessing to all the peoples of the earth. When the storms of the civil war were at their worst, and men's hearts were failing them, when the sun was turned into darkness and the moon into blood, Lincoln avowed his faith in God, in his overruling providence, and in his true and faithful judgments. "Be of good cheer." Open and secret enemies today are making war upon the government and all that for which it stands. Let there be no illusion as to that; and let us be ready to pay the price for our liberties, as our forefathers once did. But be of good cheer! There are seven thousand, and many times seven thousand, who have not yet bowed



CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY

the knee to the baal of communism and atheism and licentiousness, and who love the republic, and are willing to show it the last full measure of their devotion.

When the news reached New York of the assassination of Lincoln, and men were in panic, a great crowd had gathered in front of the treasury building, raging with anger against those who were plotting for the nation's destruction. A man appeared on the balcony, waving what appeared to be a telegram. Thinking that it was another dispatch from Washington, the crowd became quiet. The man on the balcony was James A. Garfield. Lifting his hand, he cried: "God reigns, and the government at Washington still lives."

THE CHURCH IN A STORM CENTER

The Church of Christ is passing through a storm. Winds and waves of secularism, coldness to vital truth, compromise with the world, schism, and unbelief rage about her. Where is our refuge? It is our faith in the living God and that the church is the Church of the Living God; it is in our recollection that the church has

survived many a storm—"God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in the time of trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." When the storm on the Sea of Galilee was at its worst, and the disciples, toiling at the oars, thought they were about to perish, Christ on the mountaintop saw them toiling at the rowing, and in the fourth watch of the night he came to them upon the sea.

So Christ ever comes to his church, striding across the tempests of time. Remember what God hath spoken of his church. Do not take counsel of what her enemies say. Do not take counsel of what the traitors within her gates say. Do not take counsel of your own fears or doubts, but take counsel of God. Believe what he has said about his church; that the church is graven on the palms of his hands; that it is the "glorious" church; that no weapon formed against her shall prosper; that it is the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city coming down from God out of heaven, and within whose walls is eternal beauty and light and peace.

In 1844, the eloquent fugitive slave and abolition orator, Frederick Douglas, was speaking at an abolitionist meeting in Salem, Ohio. As he warmed to the wrongs of his people and recounted their sorrows and woes, a note of melancholy, bordering on the hopelessness of despair, came into his voice. Suddenly he was interrupted by a loud cry from a woman sitting in the gallery of the church. It was Sojourner Truth, the noted Friend and abolitionist. "Frederick! Frederick!" she cried out. "Is God dead?"

When we are troubled and perplexed by the condition of the Church of Christ, and alarmed by the enemies which rise up against her, both within and without, let us take heart when we remember that God is not dead, and that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save. The Holy Spirit is still with the church. He has not departed from us, for Christ died and rose again and ascended into heaven that he might send us the Holy Spirit and that he might abide with us forever. Let us believe what God hath spoken. The God of Paul, of John, of Luther, of Calvin, of Wesley, of Spurgeon and Moody still lives. The Holy Spirit who again and again has made the dry bones in the Valley of Death to live, and has lifted the church out of the valley of its humiliation, will again show his mighty power. Therefore, be of good cheer! The church cannot live on the husks of humanism and ethics and economics and socialism. It will come to itself and return unto its Father's house, and again with joy shall we draw waters out of the well of salvation. Let us pray for it, wait for it, believe it and preach it.

STORMS OF PERSONAL TEMPTATION

There are personal storms also. There are days and nights when we must cheer ourselves and others with our faith in God, or not at all. In that hour our refuge is in what God hath spoken. In the storm of temptation, when its south wind blows softly, or its wild Euroclydon rages, our safety is in what God hath spoken, that God is faithful and just and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. When we think of God and his care, the soul can say: "I need not sin." When we think of God and his holiness—"Thou God seest me"—the soul can say, not only, "I need not sin," but, "I *will* not sin!" "How can I do this great evil and sin against God?" In the storms of grief and sorrow, what God hath spoken is our refuge and our strength. "The everlasting arms are around you and about you, the eternal God is thy refuge." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your heart be troubled."

In the storm of sin, God is our refuge and our strength. "Hear, O my soul, what God hath spoken!" "There is, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool; though they be red like crimson, they shall be white as snow." Can you believe what God hath spoken?

BE OF GOOD CHEER!

In the early days of the west, the circuit-riding preachers had to swim their horses across the rivers. They tell us that when they were crossing swollen and overflowing rivers, if they fixed their gaze upon the swirling waters around them they were likely to become dizzy, and falling from their seat, be swept away by the flood. But if they fixed their eye upon the trunk of a great tree on the bank, or upon some mighty rock, or upon the summit of a hill or mountain, they rode through in safety. In the storms of life, faith gives us balance and calm and safety, for we fix our eye, not upon the shifting scene about us, but upon the eternal God.

In conclusion: The assurance that Paul had about the end of that voyage, the word that the angel of the Lord spoke to him, was the reward of his own belief and his own faithfulness. He could say with all sincerity, "Whose I am and whom I serve." God's angels never leave such a man without their visit and their encouragement.

The angel spoke first to Paul, and said: "Paul, fear not." Therefore, Paul could speak to others. Here we have a grand example of the effect of one man's faith upon another. Paul believed that he would be saved, and that all the others would be saved, and they themselves came to believe it and were saved.

How many there are about us in the world today who wait for the believer's voice, "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God." Paul himself, later in this memorable trip to Rome, when he reached the Three Taverns on the Appian Way, weary of the buffeting of the sea, and cast down about his appearance before the then Cæsar at Rome, the monstrous Nero, was met by a little band of Christians who had come out all the way from Rome, and at great risk, too, to meet him. It was their eloquent way of saying, "Paul, be of good cheer, for we believe God." When Paul saw them, says Luke, "he thanked God and took courage."

Here are those who have lost confidence in themselves, in their personality, in their judgment, in their ability to endure and to believe. Can you say to them, "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God"? Here are others, and the great majority, who toil obscurely, do

the necessary tasks of life unrecognized, undecorated, unpraised, and unsung, and perhaps wondering if it is all worth while. Can you say to them, "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God"? Here are others who are growing old; the fires of life are sinking; they have made their exit from the stage of activity. Now they are tempted to think they are of no use in the world; only in the road. Can you say to them, "Sirs, be of good cheer"? Here are others driven hither and yon by the storms of life, tempest-tossed, for days, weeks and months; no sun, no stars, have appeared to guide them. Can you be their sun, and their stars? Can you say to them, "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe in God"?

That is the way to live; that is the way to believe. Paul was saved, and not only Paul, but all who sailed with him. God gave him the lives of those who sailed with him. Who wants to land in heaven alone? What if, when you landed on that heavenly shore, an angel should come down and say to you, "Where is your company? Where are those who sailed with you? Surely, you have not come alone?" What about those who sail with you? What about those who sail with you in your home, in your office, in your store, in your church? O Lord, increase our faith. We believe; help thou our belief; so that we can live and testify not in a way that shall say to men, "Where is now thy God?" but rather what Paul said on that storm-driven vessel in the Mediterranean so many centuries ago, "Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God."

Bridging the Gaps

By Herbert F. Goewey

Hark, there is one calling, Clear the way for the Eternal. Isaiah 40:3 (Moffatt.)

A GAP yawned between the two arms reaching out from either side to form the arch of an important new bridge. Workers had tried one way after another to bind the arch together to complete the bridge, but nothing fitted. At last the engineer in charge gave them the instructions—the very section on which the workers were standing must be swung and fitted into that place at the center of the arch. When that piece, with them upon it, was put into the center, it became the key piece, binding the bridge in a strength that no traffic could break.

There must also be living bridges. Nietzsche said that the significant thing about a man is that he is a bridge and not a goal. There are many chasms along the pathway of the Eternal which can never be completely bridged until men and women put themselves into the places of stress and decision.

THE BRIDGE OF IDEALISM

The gap between what is and what ought to be must first be spanned by soaring idealism. When men, seeking to unite two great countries in communication, first tried to bridge the chasm below Niagara falls, a strange thing happened. A boy sent a kite up into an early morning's wind and sunlight, a thing of splinters and paper, fragile but beautiful, gleaming white far above the rapids and the other shore. On its slender string a cord was sent over, then a rope, then chains and cables, and at last the bridge itself and its heavy traffic. Flimsy as youth's ideals seem, they must make the first crossings. Youth sends out its thoughts and ideals, above the gulfs of the impossible, soaring beyond the limits of today's world, sheer, high, fragile, catching the white light of God and the youth of Galilee. Nothing but such soaring into the untried can ever succeed in bridging between what is and what ought to be. These ideals are intensely personal, venturesome, fragile, daring. But on them the whole weight of one's life may later be sent.

It has been truly said, "What gets your attention gets you." A soldier in the Thirty Years' War went with his companions looting the city of Cologne; he was drunk with excitement and destruction. In a hall of art, he stopped before a pictured face. His fingers loosened and dropped their loot. His companions called to him and went on. For hours he remained, caught by the face of Christ, leaving the hall at last a changed man. He became later one of the leading Christians of Europe. The light had shone on a capacity for idealism he hadn't known he had.

This principle of attention works both ways. It is said that some people standing on the brink of the falls at Niagara become so fascinated by the power of the moving torrent that they throw themselves into its midst. Many people become so hypnotized by the downward pull of some types of unworthy living that they become lost in the maelstrom.

Let us send up our kites! Let us feel the tug and pull! Let our capacity for personal idealism push out over the chasm between what is and what ought to be.

But let us hang on to the string! Too often our ideals are like a kite I found in my yard last summer. It was a perfectly good kite, still whole. But the string had broken between it and some boy. The tug was too great for the string. And unless it is connected to the pull from the ground no kite will even stay in the air. The kite no longer flew, nor belonged to the boy, but fell to the ground—lost. So often our ideals soar high, but are not bound to anything real in ourselves. Send up your ideals, but keep in touch with them! Let us send over after them studies and work and devotion, and work ourselves across the chasm.

THE BRIDGE OF FAITH

We may follow the slender string of ideals with the firmer cord of faith. A part of the gulf between what is and what ought to be is that which yawns between the hopes of men and the proofs of God. Men are reaching always for understanding of God—and God's evidences are forever reaching out toward us. But hope and proof never quite meet. Our hearts yearn, but we hesitate and waver because proof is not absolute. We try to bridge the gap with reason. But it never quite reaches. We forget that it is ourselves who must fill in part of the bridge. Religion can never be merely theory; it is life that must fill the gap.

A woman in an isolation hospital, stricken by disease to confront death, for the second time in two weeks

called her minister from a distant conference. "Oh, why is it?" she cried. "Why must I and my babies go through so much? Why?" What could *you* answer to that cry? The only answer he could give was the one which had bridged the gap two weeks before when her physician had told her there was nothing left for her but to fight. Then he had prayed with her when she had no strength to pray, and led her to place her troubled spirit in the peace and strength of God, to trust herself to the cord of faith. On that her life held, mending slightly, during the days of the crisis. No wonder the minister must come the second time to help her grasp on to faith, to carry her through either life or death,

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to give her fevered spirit a chance. Again it helped her to pull through.

That faith which is partly sensitiveness to intangible realities and partly a sublime venture is no leap with closed eyes. It is dependent on moral sensitiveness of a high order. It is this which makes the leap, open-eyed, to close the gap between evidence and hope.

THE BRIDGE OF UNDERSTANDING

There are awful chasms between man and man. There are gulfs separating leader and worker, black and white, Frenchman and German, man and wife, father and child. Most of the woes of our time come from such divisions within the human family. They too can be closed only by living bridges, by chains of understanding, on the part of persons able to put themselves with all their faculties into comprehension, sympathy and adjustment of these differences. Marguerite McCreary puts it well in describing the work of "The Neurologist":

> With understanding he unwinds
> The knotted threads of tangled minds.
> He gathers with believing hand
> Each faded, worn and broken strand,
> And interweaves and binds with skill
> New threads of courage, hope, until
> Only the closest scrutiny
> Reveals a mended tapestry.

During the great civil conflict in our country it was only a man of the greatest powers of understanding and reconciliation who could hold the Union together and bind up the wounds. Edwin Markham says of Lincoln:

> So came the Captain with the mighty heart;
> And when the judgment thunders split the house,
> Wrenching the rafters from their ancient rest,
> He held the ridge pole up, and spiked again
> The rafters of the Home. He held his place . . .

It may be ours, following the great Understander, Jesus, to weave living chains of understanding between man and man, to help form the bridge between what is and what ought to be.

THE BRIDGE OF SURRENDER

A still stronger binder will be the cables of surrender, bridging the gulf between the sins of our times and the grace of God. Besides our own personal sins, we are a part of the social sins of the world. Our own greed, distrust and uncleanness are parts of the economic injustice, wars and lusts of society. We cannot even buy coal without having a part in the story which involves strikes and homelessness, explosions and hunger among people we have never seen. The only way for God's grace to reach over the gulf of the sins of our times is through the personal surrender of many of us.

Gandhi, in one of the supreme crises of his career, finding his people ready to break forth into violence and war, announced that if such a thing happened he would call off their anti-British campaign and go into an eternal fast, which would be broken only by death. Because they knew he meant it, his people were brought to their senses and were ready to carry forward one of the most remarkable campaigns of history, suffering torture and disgrace, but keeping true to the spirit. The better thing came only over the surrender of Gandhi who put himself in the gap.

It may be that some lack of surrender of yours or mine is crippling us, spiritually preventing God's grace from flowing through us to cleanse the sins of our times. Let us lay down for the bridge the cables of our own surrender.

THE BRIDGE OF DECISION

More positive and stronger than any of these other bridges, are the girders of decision. The hands and hearts of needy people stretch out toward God, and God's will is that they be given succor. And often we are the instruments he must use. Between time and eternity's plan, at a focal point of decision, each one of us stands most of the time. We cannot depend merely on good intentions or past records. We cannot evade. To put off or to refuse to decide is already to have decided. In many a sudden moment of decision the whole mettle of our character is tried. Shall we throw our-

selves into the path of God's plans for men, that God may march over us in order that his will may be fully realized?

In the Connecticut valley flood of 1927, the river after untold damage to the north surged on, threatening to overflow the city of Springfield. Beside its path was the plant of the electric light company on which scores of thousands of sleeping citizens were depending for safety. As the flood rose higher and began to come through the walls of the plant, one hundred and fifty men went below the surface with only the weakening walls protecting them from tons of pounding torrent—to lay sandbags and man the pumps. Through two nights and a day they worked, coming to the surface occasionally for a breath and a look at the flood twenty feet above normal, then down again below its level; every moment they remained in imminent peril being a bridge of decision for the needs of the city.

At the focal points of men's plans or of God's, as they reach out to one another, must be the heroic spirit of human personality in its moments of decision. Not always dramatically—often in complete quiet—you and I are constantly challenged as to the manner of our living. "Hark, there is one calling, Clear the way for the Eternal!"

During an international radio broadcast when some of the electrical connections broke, a young engineer picked up the ends of wire and held on to them for twenty minutes, shaken by the powerful voltage, while the power for the speech of a king went through him to millions of listeners. So must we today bridge the gaps, at points of crisis in the life of humanity. Whether it be in our ideals, our faith, our understanding, our surrender, or our decisions, may we let God swing us into his key places.

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God And This Generation

By Clarence W. Kemper

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. John 10:10 (Moffatt).

WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE was once asked what constituted true statesmanship. His answer was that it consisted in knowing what Almighty God was going to do during the next fifty years. If that is good statesmanship, how much more must it be good religion and spiritual statesmanship. Standing as we do at the end of an era—between the tomb of the old world and the cradle of a new one—we may well ask, What is Almighty God trying to do with our distraught and bedeviled generation?

Jesus states it: "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." On that memorable day in the Nazareth synagogue he specified the points of liberation that was his burden in the giving of this abundant life. In the midst of our present disillusionments we do well to be reminded that "he is able to do 'exceeding abundantly' above all that we can ask or think," and that "he will do according to his promise."

Albert E. Day of Baltimore said a true word recently. "We must work with God for a new world, if we are to work with him at all. We must work with God if there is to be a new world." Now when we seek to work with him, we have to come to close grips with the present structure of society. When we begin to deal with that we are accused of being partisan, for it is built on a partisan foundation. We are in the position where we have to deal with it, and at the same time to do so is hazardous. To all these problems we must come religiously.

RELIGION AND "PIETY"

John Henry Jowett, one of the greatest preachers of modern times, once said: "There is a type of piety abroad which says, 'Have nothing to do with politics; stand aside from the embroilments of civic strife.' Who, then, is to have the shaping of the unclean things? It gives the whole world away to the devil. I prefer to heed the word which is in the old Book, 'The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ!' Woe to the city or nation if the affairs of that city and nation are in the hands of men who approach them from beneath!"

And Alexander Maclaren, another conspicuous preacher of the past century, said: "There are the people who think that Christian men and women should be very tepidly interested in anything except what they call the preaching of the gospel and the saving of men's souls. But these do not exhaust the function of the church in the world nor the duty of the church to society. We have to learn from the metaphor of the parable. The dough is not kept on one shelf and the leaven on another; the bit of leaven is plunged into the heart of the mass. We Christians are not doing our duty unless we fling ourselves frankly and energetically into all the currents of the national life, commercial, political, municipal, intellectual, and make our influence felt in them all."

OUR ECONOMIC ORDER

God is doing something to our economic order. Something is really going on when the governor of the Bank of England writes to the governor of the Bank of France saying: "Unless drastic measures are taken to save it, the capitalistic system throughout the world will be wrecked within a year."

But we do not have to cross the sea to be warned. When the venerable Lafayette visited Boston in 1825, he made a speech from the balcony of an old house. Looking around over the well-ordered multitude of freemen who blocked all the open space the honored guest said: "Where are your poor? In this assembly I see them not. Why have they not come also"? Someone answered, "We are all here, rich and poor together." Lafayette replied: "No, the poor are not here. They are not anywhere in America. They are all in Europe." But what a change a century has brought! Today, 1 per cent of our population own 85 per cent of the nation's wealth, while millions are able to live only upon the gratuity of the state. It is ominous when 200 of

our largest American corporations control between 35 per cent and 45 per cent of all business wealth, and these 200 corporations in turn are controlled by less than 2,000 directors. This power enables these directors to distribute the proceeds of industry. That is, in a so-called democracy barely 2,000 men determine the distribution of practically half the nation's wealth. Alas, that distribution is not always motivated by service! In the disastrous year 1930 the dividend disbursements by American corporations were actually 65 per cent higher than in 1928, whereas the wages paid by these corporations dropped 19 per cent during the same period. For the eight-year period from 1926 to 1932, wage payments by manufacturing establishments dropped 38 per cent, while combined dividend and interest payments by all American corporations had increased 64 per cent.

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We submit two cases of disaster flowing from this system. The first is a family of prominence in the business, social and cultural life of my city. Upon a breakdown and court entanglement of the husband, his good wife made this revealing remark: "Doesn't it prove the folly of letting the possessive sense control us?" At the opposite extreme of society, a broken home is revealed in this eloquent news from a Denver paper: "Mrs. ——— ———, 27, took poison at her home, and told a police surgeon, 'If they won't do anything for my children while I am here, maybe they will after I am gone."

That was a fine discernment on the part of Methodist youth held last year at Evanston, Illinois, when they said: "We condemn capitalism, with its unemployment, selfish competition, and waste which inevitably accompany it. We condemn the system of economic, ethical and Christian grounds."

It looks like the era of profit-seeking has come to an end. The pity is that it came in a world-wide catastrophe. The nature of things seems to be such that selfishness cannot permanently succeed in this world. God is on the side of the spiritual imponderables. Surely the signs of these times indicate that we are moving out in the direction of a cooperative commonwealth with abundant opportunities to the individual for initiative and self-development, but less and less for enriching self at the expense of his fellows.

The church of Jesus Christ is this hour called upon to espouse the cause of the economically weak. They are like sheep without a shepherd. The church of today would do well to ponder the words of the apostle: "Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?"

When one tries to look through the eyes of our Lord and feel his compassion for the multitudes one is inclined to use the language of Moses, crying aloud to his day: "Let my people go!"

OUR RACE SITUATION

God is going to do something with our inhuman race situation. We are a nation of immigrants. There are no first families save the American Indian. Our strutting Mayflower descendants but advertise their provincialism. It is merely a question of the date as to when we arrived. True. Columbus discovered America in 1492, but we have been discovering it over and over, and are not done yet. Most of the 100 per cent Americanism boast is egotistic nonsense. It indicates something when the conservative United States chamber of commerce now agrees that Asiatics should be admitted to this country on the same quota which regulates immigration from European countries.

Is it to be wondered at that Dr. Rama Rao, conspicuous physician of India, persisted in denouncing Christianity by saying: "Christianity exists nowhere in the world except as an impossible ideal"? He was on his way to attend a great medical convention in the city of Toronto, Canada. In San Francisco he was ordered out of a barber shop. In Toronto, the hotel clerk at first refused to register him. Upon showing his credentials to the medical congress he was given the worst room in the hotel. Sensing the situation, he went out to a restaurant for his meal. There two men rose to their feet, and left the room berating the proprietor for allowing such a man to come in. After this Dr. Rao ate his meals in his room. And this occurred in the city of Toronto where we boast of great churches.

It is fair to ask whether church membership approaches the ideals of our religion. Dr. Charles E. Jefferson recently remarked that the root cause of the anti-foreign feeling in China today is the insufferable arrogance and unbearable snobbery of white men who have gone there from the west. "I wonder sometimes," says Dr. Jefferson, "that a solitary western man or woman is allowed to live in that country."

God has made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell together upon the face of the earth." There is no longer any east or west or north or south. No member of the human race can say to another, "We have no need of you." Whenever he dares say such a thing in this modern world, he is not dealing with facts, but

merely advertising himself as too small and provincial, too selfish and arrogant, to fit the situation of our modern world, which is becoming a neighborhood. God is moving in the direction of a great world family for his children. Alas, what a pity so many are so long in learning their high destiny. "No man liveth unto himself" becomes with every passing day more clearly the law of this world order and of God. It is the law of individuals, races and nations. "Men shall not lift up sword (or tariff) against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore."

"God is in Christ rebuilding our world" into unity and brotherhood, though it take a cross to do it. We still struggle up our Calvaries with the Christ.

God is surely trying to clean up the backwash of this generation. It would not be possible to think of God condoning some of the complacently accepted immoralities of our day. By what logic can one call ours a Christian civilization when it countenances, legalizes and confirms so many follies that have historically cursed the race? "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" "Can the leopard change his spots or the Ethiopian his skin?"

MODERN IMMORALITIES

Look at the gambling mania. A calm, scientific student of social life recently remarked that "nothing has so nearly debauched the American people since the war as the gambling mania." A certain prominent lady who bears the name of a Christian and is reputed a good member of her church said most casually: "I just must attend the movies several times per week, not for the sake of the movies, but in the hope that I may win a car." A young man fell ten stories to his death from a hotel in my city. He had gambled. Debts had piled up. He was worried and distracted. We are rapidly becoming a nation of gamblers. Our court records of today reveal this frequently back of stealing and suicide. We fear the church by and large is unaware of the terrible breakdown of character at this point.

Consider the matter of obscenity. Many regard that the theater was never so low as at present. Our motion pictures are too frequently demoralizing. It is estimated that sixty million people attend the movies every week. Three-fourths of these—forty-five million—are under twenty-five years of age. Fully one-third of the films slap at the sanctity of marriage. Thus there is carried on a week-by-week, nation-wide fight against modesty, decency and the sanctity of marriage. What can the church and public schools do by way of neutralizing this deadly and damning work? Is it to be wondered at that our homes continue to go to pieces under such conditions? Our papers and magazines are so bad that our neighbor, Canada, has made a long list of those she will not allow to cross her border. She is at least making an attempt to save her people from the pollution of our defiling publications. With us, even a smutty novel can become one of our best sellers.

"It cannot be doubted," says Dr. de Blois in his recent book, "by any sane person that the sins of this age are vicious and deadly. They rage like wild beasts within the soul of man. The pages of daily papers are filled with stories of crime and rottenness. Not within the memory of any living person has there been such a moral laxity, or such ribald flaunting of the nobilities and virtues of the Christian life. Not in more than one hundred years has there been such a call for a courageous crusade against the entrenched forces of evil."

A modern prophet has recently reminded us that our traditional tasks must be reappraised. Our times demand the bluntness and challenging exactness of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Pirates and their piracy must be done away. War makers and their allies in public life must be called murderers, and their work must end. Inciters of race hatred must learn that there is a sense of fitness, decency and human brotherhood that will not tolerate their blatant bigotry.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

God is trying to build his kingdom. We cannot forget that this ideal was in the heart of our Lord. Josiah Strong remarked some twenty-five years ago that the next great awakening in the Christian church would come with the rediscovery of the meaning of the kingdom of God. We are seeing his prophecy come true, but how slowly!

Our drifting, planless society cannot get on longer. It must be made a brotherhood if it is to stand. It is less and less tenable for one to call himself a follower of Jesus and not give profound consideration to this. A conservative church leader has surprised us with this trenchant remark: "If the churches fail to take leadership in the establishment of this new order, whose coming is inevitable, then the people will utterly ignore and despise the churches, and perhaps extirpate religion altogether, as Russia has sought to do." Dr. Halford Luccock reminds us that the great red-letter days of Christian history have been the days when the church has pushed out to new moral frontiers. Two such frontiers are the enterprise of building love and justice into the structural basis of our organized economic life and the elimination of the causes of war.

One would not be tempted to put down George Bernard Shaw as a preacher, but hear him: "I am ready to admit that after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I can see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will if he had undertaken the work of a practical statesman. The demands of Jesus are turning out to be good sense and sound economics."

CREATING PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

If Jesus' message means anything, God has the making of personality and character as his major concern. He went at men one by one. He put such valuation upon the individual that each might imagine himself the only person in the world. "Thou art the man," he keeps saying to us whenever he gets a chance. The English preacher, Dr. A. D. Belden, declares that "if religion ends with the individual, it ends." With full agreement, Dr. G. A. Buttrick of New York puts emphasis upon the other hemisphere of life by the remark: "Verily. But if it does not begin with the individual, it never begins and has no ending." Our generation is so distraught with its social problems that we are in

danger of forgetting or underestimating this fact. We have problems, indeed—terrible ones, but "we ourselves are problems." It is true that "every cause and movement must finally come as a suppliant to an individual altar."

The fundamental weakness of our day is the breakdown of honesty and character. Almost any system will work if good men are in control. The best of systems will fail when bad ones are directing. All who have influence and command of us must have sense of social responsibility or we all suffer. Individual regeneration precedes social regeneration. If the individual note is lost we have lost that which is indispensable. In the midst of the terrible Roman tax system, Jesus picked out Zacchæus and went after him, concerned primarily in his remaking. Only the reconstruction of the individual will lead to the reconstruction of society.

See the need today. Look at the betrayal of trust, the shaking of confidence, the losses of millions of innocent investors, business failures and bank failures. These were not due wholly to the fact that the system was wrong, bad as it has been, but rather to the fact that men charged with responsibility either were not Christian or failed to live their faith. Our modern Zacchæuses must be reborn. If anyone has any doubt, let him read John T. Flynn's realistic and damning book, "Graft in Business."

"What we need above all is the return of millions of men and women to something we have lost—a resolute and outspoken faith in the value and power of ideals, of moral and religious forces, and a determination to make honor, justice, good will and regard for the general welfare the dominant considerations in the organized life of mankind." So spoke William P. Merrill with searching aptness.

THE GOSPEL AS GOOD NEWS

God cannot do much for a complacent, satisfied, self-assured people. We can almost hear him repeating the words of the prophet: "When ye make prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." He waits to do much for us, if we will give him a chance. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Perhaps we are "trying to lift ourselves by our bootstraps." Someone has recently observed with authentic insight that "Christianity is not a religion of what we can do for God, but the good news of what God has done for us. Until God has done something for you, you cannot do very much for him."

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing:
Our helper he, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also.
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever.

Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God

By Gerard Henry Gebhardt

The Jews demand a sign, and the Greeks seek wisdom: but we proclaim a crucified Christ, . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God! I Corinthians 1:22-24.

THE Apostle Paul here elucidates a previous reference to the "foolishness of preaching." Paul had preached at Corinth, and the Jew, in his attachment to tradition, had hated the preacher and scoffed at his message; the Greek had smiled in lofty disdain; and the Roman had tolerated him in his proud unconcern. Had Peter gone to Corinth, he would have preached and scarcely known, and cared even less, how his hearers reacted to his message. Not so Paul! With his mental alertness and acumen, he could penetrate into the judgment of the Roman, into the intellect of the Greek, and into the imagination of the Jew. He sensed their respective reactions. He discerned that there were three categories of religious personalities—Jew, Greek and Christian; three characteristic quests in which men engaged; three corresponding attitudes toward the Christian gospel. To the Jew, Christ is a stumbling-block; to the Greek, foolishness; but to the Christian he is the power of God and the wisdom of God! What the Jew required, a display of power, and what the Greek pursued, the source of wisdom, those who were "called" found in one preeminent figure—Christ crucified! Let us examine these three types, with their characteristic pursuits, and their representative attitudes. They are ancient, yet peculiarly modern; they belong to an age nineteen centuries distant, still they live today.

I.

In the first category are those who demand a sign, a show of power. The proverbial Jewish craving for the ostentatious, the tangible, the miraculous, is still characteristic of oriental peoples. The Jews were accustomed to "signs." They were so much a part of their national history. Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Aaron, Gideon, Hezekiah and other revered leaders had amply justified this demand for manifestations of divine approval or direction. Two thoughts were ever in the foreground of the Jewish mind: the earlier splendors of the nation's life, and the present bondage and humiliation of the race. Illustrious was the story of the Jew, as those who have been privileged to witness the spectacle, "The Romance of a People," will eagerly testify. Other peoples were of yesterday and of the earth: the Jew was of eternity and of God. His founder was Abraham, "Friend of God" and Father of the Faithful; his lawgiver was Moses, who conversed with God; the literature of Greece and of Rome was man-made, but the Jew's was a book God-made! Proud man was this Jew, therefore, exhibiting what was almost a sense of ownership over his God. "I am God's great work," said the Jew. "I am the sign! Show me a greater, if you can!"

It is not to be wondered at, then, that throughout the

earthly ministry of Jesus the Jews demanded a sign, particularly *the* sign, the "Shekinah," the manifestation of the divine presence about the person of any who claimed to be the Messiah. Ah! Jew, thou requiredst a sign, and God gave thee a sign—the cross—and thou didst reject it! Thou didst look upon it as a stumbling-block! Are there sadder words in all the New Testament than the lamentation in the first chapter of John's gospel: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not"? The Jew received signs both from Christ and from his servants. Jesus' messiahship was repeatedly validated by the confirming evidences in his works of mercy and in his power over the natural world. And in the days of the early church "many wonders and signs were done by the apostles." Yet "none are so blind as those who *will* not see."

The world is still full of "sign-seekers." Men who are looking for redemption but are unwilling to see it in the cross of Christ! Men who put faith in ritual, ceremonial observance, ordinances, enriched worship, introduction of the "mystical" into the Protestant service, but are "out of step" with the Master in the face of the world's direst needs. Men who expect God to begin from without, rather than within their own hearts, the transforming process. Men who stake all on the "works" of political or social revolution, as such, but ignore the subtle influences of divine grace in the inner lives of human beings. These all demand a "sign," but the cross of Christ, with all its dynamic, personal implications, is a stone of stumbling unto them.

II.

The second classification of the apostle is that of the "Greeks" who "seek wisdom." The Greeks, too, had their pride of race. Their land was the center of the world's learning and culture, the cradle of each incipient "new thought." Stoics, Epicureans, Gnostics had their disciples in every civilized nation. When Paul preached at the Areopagus, it was in response to a popular demand to know "this new doctrine," for "all the Athenians . . . spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." The Greeks had made an unparalleled contribution to the evolution of mankind in their four preeminent discoveries: First, in the birth of freedom, with the consequent stimulus to finer manhood. Assyria and Egypt had wasted manhood with endless conquests and the building of pyramids. Greece discovered the key to an enhanced culture in an unfettered populace. Second, the Greeks "found" art and beauty, for all time, setting standards which modern ingenuity is incapable of emulating. A third discovery of the Greeks was poetry, setting forth in the pithiest of speech the deepest of human emotions. Philosophy, the love of truth and the passion for the good, was the fourth unique contribution of this people to the growing store of wisdom.

Nevertheless, with all their amazing zeal for wisdom, they failed to see in Christ *the* wisdom for which they were searching. Despite their "discovery" of freedom, they passed by him who was able to "break every chain" and help mankind to attain moral and spiritual freedom. With all their discernment of beauty, the Greeks looked at Christ, and saw "no form nor comeliness, no beauty that they should desire him." To them he was *not* the One "altogether lovely, the fairest of ten thousand to the soul"! Their devotion to poetry notwithstanding, they did not perceive that Christ filled every life with poetic meaning, giving "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness!" Oh! the spiritual poetry involved in bringing divinity to humanity, in lifting humanity to divinity, that there might again be "one music as before"! Philosophers though they were, these Greeks "missed" what Paul tells us was the *mystery* of the divine will, that all things in heaven and on earth should ultimately be unified, harmonized, in

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Christ. In him lay the way of reconciliation between the seemingly irreconcilable—the physical and the spiritual, the human and the heavenly.

The very learning and eloquence of the Greeks proved a hindrance to their acceptance of the gospel of Christ crucified. They would believe nothing without argument and demonstration. But the Christian religion, while not against reason, was yet above reason. Paul, with his acknowledged scholarship, understood well enough the subtleties of discussion in the speculative schools of the Greeks, and might therefore have successfully argued with his critics, but he would not. In this he was not greater than his Lord, for when certain Greeks came seeking Jesus on the eve of his passion, the record in John's gospel makes no mention of his having received them. Instead, the Master took occasion to state an elementary law of his kingdom: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth of itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." What these Greeks needed, in Jesus' day and in Paul's day, and what modern "Greeks" need is not

a new philosophy but new hearts! Not more wisdom, but "right spirits"!

Who, then, are the "modern Greeks"? They are those who think by searching to find God. Pilate's bewildered question, "What is Truth?", is echoed today by those who insist: "Where is God?" The Greeks of our time are those who are altogether wise in their own conceits; who believe every philosophy except the true one; who master all the wisdom except the wisdom of God; who read the latest books and who "know" the newest "isms"! They believe all religions have "their place" but they give *no* religion a place in their own lives. To them faith may be useful, as "rallying the universe to their support," but free grace, the gift of God, is "foolishness"! Yes, the Greeks are still with us. With all their "wisdom" they have been trying for hundreds of years to know the laws of heaven and earth, and to set the world right by them, and have not succeeded.

III.

Over against the Jews, who demand a sign, and the Greeks, who seek wisdom, stands the Christian, proclaiming Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Christ is "declared to be the Son of God *with power.*" In the cross, the Christian finds the consummation of God's great purpose to redeem his children—the "one increasing purpose" that begins in Eden, flows directly through Calvary, and reaches its fruition in the "City Four-square."

Nature, the material inventiveness of man, science and art all exhibit the mystery of power. But the power that can console the depressed spirit, that can enkindle the heart's best affections, that can invigorate the failing will and transform the corrupted, decadent soul into the likeness of the divine Ideal, *that* power is found alone in the Crucified One. It is the power of vicarious self-sacrifice which is the lesson taught by the cross—the lesson the world seems never to learn. What power can change the "leopard's spots"? The power which transformed a dwarfed and crooked Zacchaeus into a consecrated steward. The power which could assure a dying thief of a glorious entrance into Paradise. The power which could make of a savage Africaner a missionary to his people, and of a low river-thief, Jerry McAuley, a "life-changer" and a soul-saver. What makes the young man turn his face from "all the kingdoms of this world" and set it as a flint toward a missionary's service in a hidden corner of Africa? What causes men and women to face cholera, leprosy, trachoma, to minister at the bedside of the tortured and the dying? What emboldens the Salvation Army lass to brave the taunts of the degenerate and to enter the haunts of the vicious? What sustains the martyr at the stake and supports the thousands who endure the agonies of cancer with calm, untroubled spirits? It is the power of God in Christ crucified!

But the Christian also proclaims Christ, the crucified, as the *wisdom* of God! The Christ, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The cross of Christ is the "first letter in the Christian's alphabet," declared Spurgeon. "If you want to be thoroughly learned, the best place to begin is with the Bible. Begin at Christ!" Accordingly, the immortal Dickens penned, as a labor of deepest affection for his children, the "Life of Our Lord" which, after eighty-five years, the public was recently permitted to read for the first time. So, likewise, the giant intellects of such men as Locke and Newton accepted the truths of the inspired writings. They perceived that wisdom is not knowledge, but the right use of knowledge. Jesus, in childhood, amazed the learned rabbis by his penetrating questions, and in manhood confounded Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, paralyzing those who sought to ensnare him, with his incomparable words. And when we recall that the gospel was first spread abroad, not by learned teachers, but by unlettered fishermen, the conclusion is inevitable that it must have had in it, intrinsically, the wisdom of God as well as the power of God. Indeed, then, the Christian may say with St. Bonaventura that "all the learning in the world had never taught him half so much as the sight of Christ upon the cross."

To the "sign-seekers"—a stumbling-block; to those who think by searching to find God—foolishness; but to them that are called—Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God! There is a general call to the world, and there is the special call, the individual call, to the children. The church, the minister, gives the general call to men. Christ alone can give that special call to you! As when he, at the first Easter dawn, called, "Mary!" and she answered, "Rabboni!" As when he called, "Simon, lovest thou me?" and Simon answered, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee!" Or, as when he called, "Thomas!" and the latter answered, "My Lord and my God!" Or, again, as when he called, "Saul!" and that blind scholar and searcher after wisdom cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Or, finally, as when he summoned: "Zacchaeus!" and that sign-seeker walked with his new-found Master the wonderful way and tremblingly vowed: "Lord, half of my goods will I give away and restore fourfold all that I have wrongfully grasped!"

Some are here this morning, perhaps, who have been demanding a "sign"—a metaphysical portent of power; some, who have been enslaved to wisdom, climbing the heights and probing the depths of each latest "ism"; some, who have rejected the cross, laughed at grace, despising the gospel as a delusion—"foolishness!" Others have laughed at it, too, but God brought them to their knees, and they "remained to pray." We give you, this morning, the general call, our earnest invitation to see in Christ crucified the power of God and the wisdom of God. In the still, small voice of the Spirit, pleading within your own hearts, may you hear the Savior's own special call to you—to see in him your Lord and your God.

AN INFINITE INTELLIGENCE

The infinite expanse of the universe, its growth through immeasurable periods of time, the boundless range of its changes and the rational order that pervades it, all demand an Infinite Intelligence behind the manifestations. . . . Modern science has no kinship with atheism.

David Starr Jordan.

School of Religion

'That Was I Worth to God'

By George A. Buttrick

And the Lord said unto David . . . Whereas it was in thine heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. I Kings 8:18.

DAVID longed to build a temple for his people. Who would not? To see it on a high hill, enshrining in stone the heroic record of Israel, granting to men the gifts of pageantry and song, standing as the sentinel of the ideal life, calling people from the fret of days to their home in God—to see it thus age after age, unto children's children; who would not wish thus to bless his fellows? But the word came to David: "Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house." Therein is all the tragedy of the unfulfilled.

I

The Bible says he was denied his dream because of his sin: "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and made great wars." Yet David was finer than his neighbors. He was the logical man to build the temple—a man "after God's own heart." The smart-aleck school of magazine writing has made merry over that phrase, reminding us of David's fleshliness. But the distinctive thing about David was not his lust—for it was a crude and lustful age—but the fact that he almost alone among men regarded his fleshliness with pangs of conscience. Judged by the standards of his time, he was an elect soul. His desire to build the Temple was largely unselfish, but it was thwarted. We can understand the defeat of unworthy ambition: the breath of God ought to wither money-greed or the arrogance of power. Soon or late it does. But why should our high dreams be mocked by sin's lapse, or death's untimely coming, or by the poverty of our powers? That is one of the sharpest questions of our mortality.

But, you say, David's son Solomon fulfilled his father's cherished purpose. Pathetically we promise ourselves that our children will arrive at the land of heart's desire, though we ourselves may fall by the way. Did Solomon succeed? As though the poor hut of cedarwood and brass he built could ever have contented him! In any event his temple was destroyed, and after it a far nobler temple was desecrated and tumbled in ruins. These temples whose plans we yearn over in the night—are they ever built? Your best hopes—do they ever come? No. "Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house." . . . There is some accomplishment, but that accomplishment serves only to kindle a vaster dream. And how clumsy the hands to build the walls of a vision! And how soon death knocks at the door! "These all died . . . not having received the promises." So says the Book. And the psychologists call it a book of "escape"! Hardly will you find elsewhere a realism so stark.

II

William McFee has a novel called "Casuals of the Sea." It mainly concerns a boy who was a dreamer. His father caught him sharply under the chin when he found him dreaming, arousing him through the pain of a bitten tongue; while his teachers belabored him with books of "facts"—facts so much less entrancing than his imaginings. Thus the boy was stranded on what the author calls "the stony beach of the actual"—which is precisely where we all are stranded. He grew up at a loose end, through the streetcorner gang and its petty thieving to a clerkship in a cigar store. Then, fearing lest that routine should harden into a dungeon, and knowing that if he did not soon escape he would never escape, he ran away to sea. Stores and mean streets, the

George A. Buttrick

black midge-breed of humanity, the dust of the commonplace—these were actual: a stony beach. But the sea! The sea was at least the perfect symbol of his vague, vast longings. There he might have time and room to watch the swinging lanterns of eternity. And so it befell, until sickness came to shorten his days. The story's end shows him going down to the harbor again to see a ship set out which rumor called a mystery-ship because always it sailed under sealed orders. "Cast off! Cast off!", he muttered as death came; "Cast off! Sealed orders!"

So he went—out into the silent sea. To what port no man knows—under sealed orders. On board a cargo of unrealized longings! Would his hopes be his in some far haven? Would that we could tell! But in stark fact our dreams here are thwarted and sometimes blackly mocked. The temple of a sovereign purpose is not built. The sea of dreams scraps us as "casuals"—we are only tramp-steamers. The hope is planetwide: the deed is pinched.

Therein is all the pathos and the tragedy of the unfulfilled.

III

"And the Lord said unto David: Whereas it was in thine heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart." Is that the answer? Does God (if there is a God) accept our purposes as though they were prayers, our intention as our deed? Some answer we must find, for this conflict between dream and fact confronts us at every turn of the road. It is not an academic question. What will you say about your unselfish hopes and their apparent thwarting?

We may say this first: *Such hopes persist.* There is no man so sunk but that he has yearned in some odd moment to leave the world better than he found it. For most people these moments are frequent. Bobbie Burns, for example:

> E'en then a wish—I mind its power—
> A wish that to my latest hour
> Shall strongly heave my breast—
> That I for poor old Scotland's sake
> Some useful plan or book could make,
> Or sing a song at least.

Such a wish is ours—to be a medium of blessing not only to our own land but to our humankind. We are afflicted with what George Bernard Shaw has called "the evolutionary appetite." Says he, in the preface to "Saint Joan": ". . . men will, in the pursuit of knowledge and of social readjustments for which they will not be a penny the better, and are indeed often many pence the worse, face poverty, infamy, exile, imprisonment, dreadful hardship, and death." That is his way of saying that we all like David long to build the Temple. We look at St. Francis and yearn to be like him—our spirits the shrine of God. We look at Grenfell or Schweitzer: if only we could find our Coast of Labrador or our Labarene Forest, where we might work our work of redemption! Granted that we blunder and do wrong, and slam the door on our own best usefulness, and live ever after with misgivings, having lost the strength that belongs only to the childlike; granted that our world is a strangely intractable world in which dreams win only step by step against stubborn contradiction; granted that we have scarcely begun our work before the grim reaper cuts us down—granted all that, the dream persists!

In so ambiguous an earth it has no right to persist. But it does. It would seem as though there is Something or Someone out of sight who honors it—Someone, perchance, whose spirit it is. This is an age of "debunking." We have become masters in the biography of disparagement. But let the derogation be never so dark and never so deserved, it stops short at this one fact: the dream in the heart of man persists. The conduct may be murderous, but it cannot slay the dream. It is a prime fact: unselfish hopes—the longing to build the Temple—seem to flow from eternal springs.

IV

We can go on to say that we must choose, therefore, by an act of faith between the persistent hope and the opposing circumstance. Edwin Markham has tersely stated that choice:

> On the bough of the rose is the prickling briar;
> The delicate lily must live in the mire;
> The hues of a butterfly go at a breath;
> At the end of the road is the house of death.
>
> Nay, nay: on the briar is the delicate rose;
> In the mire of the river the lily blows;
> The moth is as fair as a flower of the sod:
> At the end of the road is a door to God.

He calls the little poem: "Take your Choice." Pin your faith, if you will, to the seeming contradiction of the dream—"Thou shalt not build the house"; say that life is a meaningless hubbub—something like turning the dial of a radio: a song, an advertisement, a fragment of a dramatic sketch, a Presidential speech, the faint echo of an organ, all lost at last in static. Or pin your faith, if you will, to the enduring hope; say: "It is everywhere. It is in me. It beats in all the human like the beat and roll of celestial drums. It shall find its answer some day in some far, spiritual city; and meanwhile we must be true."

"Take your choice." But let it be clear that the

A Pastoral Prayer

By Gregory Vlastos

O GOD, who hast given us the grace to carry the sword of Thy kingdom of peace; who hast sent us messengers of peace in a world of strife, messengers of strife in a world of false peace: make strong our hand, make clear our voice, temper our firmness with humility, and strengthen our passion with insight; that we may fight not to conquer but to redeem.

O God, who hast given us the grace to be the instruments of love in its work of healing and of judgment; who has commissioned us to proclaim forgiveness and condemnation, deliverance to the captives, and captivity to the proud: give us the patience of those who understand, and the impatience of those who love; that the might of Thy gentleness may work through us, and the mercy of Thy wrath may speak in and through us.

O God, who hast set us upon a hill, a city of light that cannot be hid; and who dost bid us shine forth in all places, uncover the hidden works of darkness, and make plain the lies of greed and self-esteem: grant us the power that we spare not ourselves or others, but send forth Thy light, without fear or favor, to those who seek it and to those who fear it.

O God of truth and love and peace, we thank Thee for Thy constraint upon us, for work undone which we must do, for truth unspoken which we must speak. Possess us. Be strong in us, that we may be strong to do Thy will. In the name of our Lord, who calls us to Thy kingdom of peace and love and truth. Amen.

choice of the dream is at least positive, while the taking of a clue from the contradiction will always be negative. Let it be clear that living for the dream, against the besetment of sin and circumstance and death, is grandly difficult and heroic. Let it be clear that living for the dream is life-giving while the other way curdles into a bitterness—life-giving, for the leaders of the tattered battalions in the seemingly hopeless cause have always been zestful and radiant souls. "Take your choice." But the positive is yet presumably better than the negative; the heroic holding-on better than a despairing letting-go; the way that breeds zest truer than the way that breeds hostility. "Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart."

There is something else to be said. This: *There is always Jesus.* "But why take our clue from him?", the modern mind may ask. Well, why not take our clue from him? As well fix your eyes on him as on "matter"; he is at least alive. Was anyone so alive? He was earth's most vibrant soul. "Was"? Can we speak of him thus who so catches the present wistful longing of mankind? He lived for the dream. David called it "The Temple," and saw it in vision in Jerusalem. Jesus called it "The Kingdom of God," and saw it filling heaven and earth: "Thy kingdom come, as in heaven so on earth." He met the contradiction: it was as cruel as a cross. But—such being the saving paradox of Christ—by clinging to the dream against the blackest besetment of hate and fear, by daring his hope against all the doom of Calvary, he set it free. Now his dream, having made of the stigma of the cross the stigmata of redemption, moves like the cross over the skyline of our human dwellings. Why not take our clue from him? Who else has made such test of the longings of the soul?

Was he not always saying in his own way, "Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart"? "A cup of cold water in my name—in my nature": what a contrast between that deed—a cup of water—and that purpose! But, said he, the tiniest deed may give God assurance of a grandeur of soul. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward": if a man can do no more than give hospitality to a prophet, if he has for himself no flaming word, nevertheless he tells God what company he likes to keep. If he can do no more than the man who after the council in which Luther had made his defense patted Luther on the back, saying, "Well done, little monk"—if he can do no more, he has yet revealed himself, and God in mercy takes the glimmer for the fulfilment. That is how Jesus speaks about our thwarted hopes: "He shall receive a prophet's reward"; and what else can that be but the zest of being a prophet? "He shall receive a righteous man's reward"; and what is that but the reward of righteousness itself? So Jesus spoke, and told us that life here is only one bead on a string, only the visible part of "an invisible continuity"; that death is not death but only a small and theatrical interruption of life. "Thou didst well in that it was in thy heart."

> . . . all the world's coarse thumb
> And finger failed to plumb,
> So passed in making up the main account;
> All instincts immature
> All purposes unsure
> That told not as his work, but swelled
> the man's amount.
>
> Thoughts hardly to be packed
> Into the narrow act,
> Fancies that broke through language and escaped,
> All I could never be,
> All men ignored in me,
> That was I worth to God whose wheel the
> pitcher shaped.

The lines are Browning's, but the truth he learned from Christ, whose life and love shine behind it and through it like a never setting sun.

V

What then? Your best hopes on earth will not be realized on earth: as fast as you realize them—if you are so fortunate—they take a grander shape, and become a "flying goal." But do not ever surrender the hope. You will not complete your Temple of Desire, and the word is spoken to you: "Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house." But do not ever quit the task. For a vision carried to a cross, the dream to which a man is loyal in a seeming failure, is thereby released and fills the earth! And if you remain faithful, God accepts the purpose as the deed. The gray light in the east he accepts as promise of the day. Written across the heart-break of the years and across their struggle, if you keep troth and pray, is this saving word: "Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart."

Making God Real

By Willard L. Sperry

THE first task of religion is to make God real to the world. If we make God a little more real than otherwise he would be to any single human being we have not wasted our little lives in a large world, or lived in vain.

Just what is the contribution of our religion to the kind of life we live in the kind of world at hand? There is one point at which our lives differ very radically from the lives of all men who have gone before. That is the dimensions of the world of which we are aware.

Our ancestors were aware of their villages, towns, cities, and at times of the whole nation. But we are aware of the whole world, day by day. Its problems are presented to us each night over the air, and its dilemmas stated to us every morning with our newspaper. There is probably no way of reckoning the effect on us. Only time can tell what kind of human beings will be finally produced by the process which delivers the entire world, daily, at our doors. It will probably be a curiously contradictory inner life. Its gifts are a new dignity and self-importance. We feel ourselves citizens of no mean world. On the other hand we feel overpowered, depressed and helpless in such a world. There is so much that needs doing, and yet how little we are before such large tasks! We can give a little money, we can help a cause, and above all we can count one at the polls on election day. Yet what

is that, one vote among so many, when there is no miracle to multiply it and insure its success?

More particularly religious people who care about peace and a fairer distribution of wealth, and a dozen other such pressing causes, feel hopelessly puzzled and baffled.

It seems to me our help lies in training ourselves to think about all these matters only after we have first thought about God. We must try to imagine earnestly what God's nature and character are, to understand what his will is. When we have done our best at this then we must turn and make our own decisions, cast our vote. It makes a difference whether you decide all these matters with God in mind or with God left out. For any kind of a God whom we can honestly imagine and believe in forbids our settling any of these issues—war, peace, money, labor—on a narrow basis. No God whom we can today conceive can be purely a partisan. Religion breeds in us the habit of an honestly nonpartisan thinking, even though we must live and work through parties.

And then religious people will try to persuade others that there is a God and that he cares. This does not mean that religion takes no interest in business and politics. To take no interest, religiously, in such matters, would mean being born again into some other race or century. The great contribution which religion should make to the solution of any one of the major practical problems of our time is that of making God real to all concerned. We can solve them rightly only when we all have God in mind. The people of our day will act more wisely with God in mind than with God forgotten or neglected. [From a sermon recently delivered at the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.]

Four Timely Poems

By Thomas Curtis Clark

Build Me a House

BUILD me a House,
Said God;
Not of cedar-wood or stone,
Where at some altar-place
Men for their sins atone.
To me, your only sin
Is to build my House too small:
Let there be no dome
To shut out the sky,
Let there be no cumbering wall.
Build me a House, a Home,
In the hearts of hungering men—
Hungering for the bread of hope,
Thirsting for faith, yearning for love,
In a world of grief and pain.
Build me a House!

Build me a World,
Said God;
Not with a navy's strife,
Nor with a host in arms,
Compassing death, not life.
Build me a World, said God,
Out of man's fairest dreams;
Heaven must be its dome,
Lighted by prophet-gleams;
Justice shall be the stones
On which my World shall rise;
Truth and Love its arches,
Gripping my ageless skies.
Out of dreams, on the earthy sod,
Build me a World,
Said God.

These poems are selected from the new volume, "Home Roads and Far Horizons," by Thomas Curtis Clark. Used by permission of the publishers, Willett, Clark & Company, Chicago.

The New Loyalty

LET us no more be true to boasted race and clan,
But to our highest dream, the brotherhood of man.
Shall Babel walls of greed and selfishness divide?
Shall not the love of friends illume the patriot's pride?
For moated arsenals let shrines of art atone;
Where armies met in blood, let garden plots be sown.
Let royal hunting grounds be parceled out anew
That little children's feet may know the grass and dew.
No more shall Mammon play with pawns of toiling men,
No more shall blood be spilled that Greed may count its gain.
Let patience be our power and sympathy our court,
With love our only law and faith our only fort.
New thoughts, new hopes, new dreams, new starry worlds to scan,
As Time proclaims the dawn, the brotherhood of man.

The Call

WHILE mighty earthquakes rock the world's foundation,
And chaos threatens empires and their kings,
While men of strength lie stricken in the wreckage,
And men of wisdom cease their utterings,
While darkness menaces man's puny striving,
And new-born terror haunts the land and sea,
Still walks a lonely Peasant by a lakeside
And calls to His disciples, "Follow Me."

Victims

OPITY not the soldier dead who lie
In quiet tombs—poor, cheated sons of fate;
But pity us who still hear war-fiends cry,
Who still must know the world is rife with hate.

The Minister as Leader of Worship

By Norman E. Richardson

PROTESTANT ministers proceed upon the assumption that the experiences of the worshipers constitute the areas wherein the failures and successes of the leaders of worship are recorded. It is what happens to those who are present in the sanctuary during the service and those who, though absent, are affected by it, that really matters. The leader should have definitely and intelligently conceived purposes as he tries to help people realize the presence of God. He may never know all the changes that take place in their personalities as they achieve *rapport* with God. But he should know some transformations which he undertakes, definitely, to bring about.

● *The Goals of Worship*

The leader helps the worshipers: to offer praise and adoration; to express gratitude and thanksgiving; to dedicate to God something which they possess and that belongs to him; to consecrate themselves; to enjoy the beauty or majesty of God's handiwork; to renew their sacred vows; to search for dependable knowledge of God and his manifestations; to contemplate the total meaning and value of life.

Considering another phase of human life, the leader helps worshipers: to express penitence or confess their sins; to gain moral energy to fight evil; to submit to the will of God; to gain clearer insight into the difference between good and evil; to realize the dependability of God's providential care; to gain the disposition and ability to undergo hardships in doing God's will.

Still further, the leader of a service of worship helps the members of the worshiping congregation: to enjoy the fellowship of disciples of Jesus Christ; to gain strength to do what is right; to participate in the kingdom-of-God project, in one or more of its many aspects; to present to God gifts worthy of their relationship to him; to offer prayers of intercession, supplication, and petition.

● *The Greatness of The Task*

But why does the leader undertake such a difficult and varied task as this? To give human beings the help they need in exhausting the possibilities of a score or more patterns or modes of worship is a staggering undertaking. The minister who understands the essential nature of worship and comprehends, even in part, the marvelous functions of worship at its best, in chastening, enriching and invigorating human personality, stands in the presence of the sacredness and the mystery of his vocation. As a liturgist he can develop the passion of an ardent evangelist. As a result of his liturgical ministry, he can see souls born into the kingdom and making marked spiritual progress.

Worship helps people to live spiritually eventful lives. It fosters a sense of security in the midst of seeming insecurity. It quickens a feeling of power when the personality is limp and weak. For loneliness, it substitutes fellowship with the Divine One. It rejuvenates sacred covenants that had lost their vitality in the wear and tear of life. Worship makes possible new discover-

Norman E. Richardson

ies and new creations in the art of living. The minister, as liturgist, appreciates these values. How can he gird himself for such a sacred and exalted task as this? Is there a technique that he can study? Are there skills that he can acquire? Is there an *art* as well as *philosophy* of worship? What has an age of technology to say about leadership in worship?

The following principles may suggest an intelligent approach to the task of acquiring mastery in this sacred office:

● *Purpose and Consistency*

1. Have *a definitely conceived purpose* which you wish to bring to fruition in each service. If the archangel Gabriel should challenge the minister as he enters his pulpit, saying: What do you expect your people to get out of this service of worship you have planned, there should be forthcoming a clear and worthy answer. The leader of public worship should face squarely and honestly the questions: Why am I leading this particular service? What outcomes may my people reasonably expect if they follow my leadership in this service?

2. Formulate a worship program *for the entire church, extending over a period of one year.* The advantages of such a plan are obvious. Certain points of yearly emphasis have their place. Provision can be made in anticipation of them. The total program for the year has unity, sequence, coherence. The sense of responsibility for the entire program all the time is supplanted by a feeling of responsibility for one service at a time.

● *Balance of Emphasis, Variety, Unity*

3. Preserve a *balance of emphasis* between historic traditions and current trends. Worship, like language, is a living, growing, thing. Changes in both form and content are inevitable if it is to minister to life in a vital way. In the selection and use of the facilities of worship, the best of the old hymns, prayers, litanies, and other helps should not be forgotten. Nor should the worthy new creations be ignored. Excessive novelty endangers reverence. A complete absence of new materials suggests stagnation and mustiness.

4. Use *variety in the form and the content of the service* in order to incite interest and keep attention alert. Monotony breeds listlessness. A change of menu whets the appetite. The responsibility for fighting drowsiness should be shared by the minister. Pleasant surprise and reverence are not incongruous. The content can be changed while the order of service remains the same. Too great familiarity with the service may constitute a spiritual pitfall.

5. Strive for *unity* in each worship service. A basic pattern, containing a climax or point of special emphasis and tension, prevents digressions, distractions, detours. A worship experience that results from a helter-skelter assembling of favorite hymns and scripture passages that come to mind at the moment, is apt to result in disrespect for or lack of confidence in worship. The laws of alternation, crisis and progress presuppose a basic pattern that conserves the unity of the service.

6. Make sure that all who assist in directing the various activities involved in the service, *cooperate.* This applies to the relationship between the minister and the organist, choir leader, ushers, janitor, collectors, and every other person whose ministry may suggest

harmony, concord and mutual loyalty. Every such person should have a feeling of value and an intelligent purpose that is shared by all who help conduct the service. Every discord is a distraction.

● *Sympathy and the Prophetic Note*

7. Try to cultivate *social imagination and sympathy* with regard to the worshipers. When Jesus saw the multitudes as sheep without a shepherd—tired, hungry, bewildered—he said: Let us pray. When he saw Jerusalem, he wept. To Nicodemus he said, Ye must be born again. The leader of worship interprets his people to God. He is their priest. He takes upon himself their burdens of woe, their sense of need. This sympathetic bond is sure to be expressed in the leader's voice and personal bearing as well as in his selection and arrangement of materials of worship.

8. *The prophet's voice* should be heard in every service of *public* worship. To worship a God of righteousness involves ethical heart searching. God's word needs to be applied to contemporaneous conditions. The forces of evil and the organized efforts of social betterment are not forgotten by the one who worships God in spirit and in truth. The worship experience purifies motives and conduct patterns. It carries over into everyday living.

● *Twofold Purpose Of Worship*

9. *To preserve the continuity of the worship tradition and to be creative of new spiritual values* constitute the twofold purpose of worship. The minister who at the close of the worship service says to himself, "Well, one more service over," misses the real point. The end of the service should be the beginning of new pastoral responsibilities. It is not enough to use dependable materials to awaken aspiration or to accentuate a feeling of inferiority on the part of the worshipers. To follow through with this spiritual process, begun in worship, until it has completed itself in the lives of the worshipers, is a part of the leader's responsibility. There is a creative use of authority that should not be confused with "authoritarianism" in worship. The list of breakfast specials numbered one, two, three and four on the menu card of a restaurant is a symbol of orthodoxy. It may or may not meet the needs of the customer who is "on a diet."

10. *The leader should recognize the problem of motivation,* as he tries to build a worshiping congregation. To try to direct the worship activities of pharisees and publicans, secularists and pietists, realists and idealists, mystics and motor-minded pragmatists is to face a fearfully difficult task. If the leader tries to use strange and unnatural motivation in getting out a crowd to his Sunday evening service, he adds confusion to a badly confounded situation. Strive to purify the motives that lead people to come to the sanctuary. Worship is its own best salesman. A church that is worship-minded and that finds life-giving values in worship will resent the appeal to shoddy motives.

● *Distinctive Ideals And Traditions*

11. *Loyalty to the distinctive ideals and traditions* of the church that supplies the facilities for worship is to be expected of the leader of worship. This does not involve mechanical conformity. Loyalty is not incompatible with intelligence. But there are special emphases, unique values, which are developed and fostered in the great denominational groups. This is one of the glories of Protestantism. There can be a greater unity if the diverse gifts of the spirit are recognized. The Quakers feel little or no need of objective symbols to aid them in their communion with God. The Protestant Episcopal groups enjoy and profit by esthetic stimulation. These many types of liturgical, semi-liturgical, and non-liturgical worship continue for they are full of spiritual vitality.

12. In keeping with the law of cognition, *every service should be planned with reference to the needs, capacities, cultural background, and interests of the worshipers.* Worship in Protestant churches is expected to be full of meaning. It leads to clearer insights into and better understanding of God's word and the conditions of spiritual growth. To adapt the service to the limitations and capabilities of the worshipers may constitute a difficult task for the leader. It is easy for him to feed his own soul and assume that, thereby, he is ministering in a vital way to his people. Immature worshipers should not be bewildered with materials that awaken only mental confusion. Simple surroundings suggest simplicity of procedure. Worship in a rural chapel should not strain to imitate the elaborate liturgy of a city cathedral. Appropriateness is one of the first laws of worship.

● *The Total Worship Experience*

13. The selection and arrangement of the facilities of worship that constitute a particular liturgical unit should be guided by the *principal of balance of emphasis.* The worshiper needs help in becoming aware of God and in constituting a vital social relationship with him. The total worship experience should include stimulus and reaction, impression and expression. It should include emotional, rational, and motor responses. Opportunity for silent meditation should follow the grasp of new knowledge or the achievement of new understanding. Opportunity actively to participate in the service should follow the achievement of awareness of God.

14. Finally, it is required of the leader of worship that he be obviously *sincere.* He should pay the price, whatever it may be, of becoming intelligently enthusiastic concerning the value and meaning of worship. He should have confidence in worship as an effective means of solving individual and social problems. If he appreciates deeply its possibilities in realizing the reign of God's love among men, he will put himself into it wholeheartedly. The gospel indicates that on a certain occasion, when Jesus had ceased praying, one of his disciples said to him, "Master, teach *us* to pray."

Until man has found God, and has been found by God, he begins at no beginning and works to no end.... Nothing in the universe or in man's life falls into place except with God; with God who fights with man and through man against everything that is evil; who loves us all as a great captain loves his men, and stands ready to use us in his immortal adventure against waste, disorder, cruelty, vice, blind force, nonexistence, everything that destroys.

God is the end and the meaning of the universe, the only King. God's kingdom on earth is not a dream or an uncertain project, but the inevitable destiny of mankind.

H. G. Wells.

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FOLLOWING the world war, in which he served in the overseas Canadian army, Rev. GEORGE A. CLARKE was called to the pastorate of the First Baptist church of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Five years later, he entered Crozer seminary, and after graduation there he became pastor of Emmanuel Baptist church, Brooklyn, where he still ministers. He is president of the Brooklyn Church and Mission federation. The sermon published in this issue was preached by Dr. Clarke as the annual sermon of the Northern Baptist convention this year.

Since his graduation from Princeton seminary, in 1905, Rev. CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY has had but three pastorates: at First Presbyterian church, Paterson, New Jersey; at Arch Street church, Philadelphia; and at First church, Pittsburgh, where he now ministers. His denomination elected him moderator of its general assembly in 1924-25. Dr. Macartney has published many books, among them "Things Most Surely Believed," "Twelve Great Questions About Christ" and "Lincoln's Cabinet."

Rev. HERBERT F. GOEWEY *is an honor* graduate of Union college, Schenectady, and of Boston university school of theology. The Boston school awarded him a fellowship which took him to the universities of Marburg and Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, for graduate study. Dr. Goewey has been pastor of the Covenant Methodist church, Worcester, Massachusetts, and at Easthampton and Northampton, Massachusetts. He has recently been transferred to St. James church, Stoneham, in greater Boston.

For ten years Rev. CLARENCE W. KEMPER ministered at the Baptist Temple, Charleston, W. Va., but about two years ago he was called to the First church, Denver, Colorado. Earlier pastorates were in Chicago, Cincinnati, Minneapolis and Lansing. Dr. Kemper has been a leader in the activities of the Northern Baptist convention, and in interdenominational work. He received his B.D. degree from the Divinity school of the University of Chicago.

Since 1932 Rev. GERARD H. GEBHARDT has been pastor of the "Old First" Reformed church, Philadelphia—the "mother church" of the Philadelphia area, founded in 1727. His earlier pastorates were in Indianapolis and Wadsworth, Ohio. He is active in interdenominational enterprises; he is a member of the Federal council's youth commission.

Rev. GEORGE A. BUTTRICK *had early* pastorates in Quincy, Illinois, and Rutland, Vermont. From 1920 to 1927 he ministered to the First Presbyterian church, Buffalo, and for the past eight years has led the activities of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian church in New York city. Dr. Buttrick was born in England, and received his education at Lancaster Independent college, Manchester, and at Victoria university.

Dr. GREGORY VLASTOS *is professor of* philosophy in Queen's university, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

Dr. NORMAN E. RICHARDSON *is professor* of religious education and dean of the summer session at Presbyterian Theological seminary, Chicago.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

THEODORE K. VOGLER, Pilgrim Congregational, Duluth, Minn. "When Christ Gets His Chance." Luke 7:32—". . . like children sitting in the market-place and calling to another and saying, We have piped unto you and ye have not danced. We have mourned unto you and ye have not wept."

WILLIAM M. ERHARD, Clarksburg, W. Va. "Living Deeply." Matthew 13:21—"He has no root in himself, he does not last." (Moffatt.)

DOBBS F. EHLMAN, Second Evangelical and Reformed, Indianapolis, Ind. "God's Need for Friendly Persons." Job 6:14—"Friends should be kind to a despairing man, or he will give up faith in the Almighty." (Moffatt.)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

.....

Text used (Write out the text)

.....

Name of minister

.....

Name of Church

.....

Address

WARREN C. JOHNSON, St. Luke's Lutheran, York, Pa. "American Tragedy," Jer. 18:15, 16—"My people have forgotten me, and sacrificed to no-gods! So they stumble as they pass along the old path, and then take to bypaths of their own, badly made; till their country goes to ruin." (Moffatt.)

J. KENDRICK BALLOU, Congregational, Alturas, Calif. "The Forgotten Man." Psalm 8:4, 5—"What is man . . . for thou hast made him a little lower than God." Matthew 22:45—"Inasmuch as ye have done it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it not unto me."

ALFRED W. HURST, Pilgrim Congregational, Chattanooga, Tenn. "For Country and for God." Amos 3:3—"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" ("Do two men walk together, unless they have made an appointment?"—American translation).

THOMAS B. ROBERTS, First Methodist, Ironton, O. "Testing Our Beliefs." Acts 27:27, 28—"About midnight the sailors surmised that they were drawing near to some country: and they sounded, and found twenty fathoms; and after a little space, they sounded again, and found fifteen fathoms."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THERE can be no doubt that the history books of the future will be well thumbed at that very period through which we have been living in the past four weeks and will be living in the weeks that lie just ahead. Some great world issues are coming to the test. Whether the peace hopes of mankind are to be sustained, or dashed to ruin, or vitiated by a specious but, in the long run, illusory method of achieving peace, cannot be determined at this writing. But precedents are being established, the League of Nations is being taken seriously, a dictatorship is hanging on the edge of what may prove to be either oblivion or immortality, the world's greatest empire faces the possible emergence of a rival whose aims, if they are attained, would imperil its integrity, and the whole world, beginning with Europe, confronts the possibility of a war more terrible than that whose blood was only yesterday washed from its hands. By the time these words are read, the scene in the Mediterranean and at Geneva will have changed so many times that it is folly to express an opinion as to the outcome, as it is also impossible in this brief paragraph to make analysis of the crisis. But this must be said: There could not be a more perfect demonstration of the economic and imperialistic character of modern war than the one which now threatens the world. And this is no more true in terms of Italy's designs on Ethiopia than of Great Britain's attempt through the League of Nations to bring those designs to naught.

Italy and Britain Face Each Other

The Book of the Month

TEN-MINUTE SERMONS, *by Lewis H. Chrisman. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.00.*

IT IS EASIER to preach a long sermon than a short one—the longer, the easier! How hard it is to quit! And how hard to get something said before you have to quit! For that reason I was drawn to this book by Dr. Chrisman in the hope that I could learn from him not only how to quit, but also to make sure that I had said something worth while before I had to quit! And I was not disappointed. Before reading this book, I could not have imagined that a man could actually take a text, expound it, apply it, and clinch the application, in the space of ten minutes! But it can be done. The old story which Lyman Abbott, I think it was, first told about President Hadley's quietly saying to him as they were entering the Yale chapel service, " No souls are saved here after twenty minutes," has always seemed to imply an affront to good preaching, for it takes me twenty minutes to get started! And I have always felt that if any souls were saved at all by my preaching it was *after* twenty minutes, and some minutes after! But Dr. Chrisman has converted me—no, not converted, but convinced me; conversion, I believe, involves reform! Souls can be saved in *ten* minutes! These sermons are gems. There are 77 of them. Every one is complete in its homiletic structure, and such flawless and graceful English! Every sermon is seminal—it falls into your mind and lies there for a day or a week, but soon or late you will become aware of something pushing itself up through the clods of your mind and behold, it is a sermon of your own, sprouting from this living seed! More important than this sermon-begetting value of the book is the impact of its messages upon the reader's heart and conscience. You will want to keep this book at hand, and read a "sermon" at those times when your heart craves not merely homiletic material but spiritual food.

A Thought for the Month

HAS anyone called attention to the *inner* breakdown of our economic system—the breakdown of its morality? The two great moral virtues of the system are thrift and faithfulness to contract. Without these virtues capitalism cannot stand. People must have an incentive to save some of their income, and they must have a lively sense of honor in fulfilling their contractual obligations. But we are witnessing today the fading out of these personal virtues. The virtue of thrift is melting away in an orgy of spending. Why save? Investments are precarious. Hoarding is illegal. And besides, the only hope for a return of prosperity is for everybody to follow Uncle Sam's example and spend as much as he can. The virtue of spending is becoming a substitute for the virtue of thrift. The enormous increase in gambling and the change in the public attitude toward it reflects the disintegration of thrift. Instalment buying—a form of near-gambling—also reflects it: instead of laying aside a portion of one's income, one not only spends it all but mortgages one's future income. Hence the great prosperity of the automobile industry at the moment. Likewise the virtue of "business honor" is growing pale. Nobody thinks it strange for people to evade their debts—individuals, corporations, even churches. How could it be otherwise when the debt structure is over 200 billions, resting on an asset foundation of only 250 billions? Mortgage moratoria are the order of the day—forced by local public opinion where not provided by law. Collection of credit accounts was never so poor. It is becoming old-fashioned to rate a man as honest because "he pays his debts." Will these moralities of thrift and business honor be revitalized when prosperity sets in again? It is doubtful. The return of prosperity is more likely to be regarded as the supreme chance to spend more freely, to gamble more wantonly, to make a "killing," to pledge the future by mortgages and installment buying, thus heaping up another pyramid of debt until the system crashes in "the next great depression." This is the moral temper of the times to which the preacher must address his message. And yet there are those who say that the pulpit should have nothing to do with public affairs like economics!

The Fading Morality Of Capitalism

Charles Clayton Morrison

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